

From the Pastor's Desk...

Friends,

As people, we like marking time. We hang calendars on the wall and set them on our desks. They are critical pieces of our digital devices. From the youngest age, we teach children the days of the week and the months of the year. We mark the passing of time with birthdays and anniversaries.

This marking of time can be holy. For children, their birthday is just about the best day of the year. As we age, we may not relish each birthday celebration, but we usually say that it beats the alternative. Some anniversaries of life events are painful, even as they are important. Our newest Presbyterian hymnal, called *Glory to God*, has a whole section of hymns for “Celebrating Time.” As Christians, we believe that every moment is a gift from God. And so, we can celebrate time by giving thanks for the past and having confidence that God holds the future.

This month, our church gets to mark an important anniversary with our Parish Associate, the Rev. Neeta Nichols. Fifty years ago this month, she was ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the northern church pre-cursor denomination to the Presbyterian Church (USA). At that time, she had been called to serve as Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Adrian, Michigan. Her ordination took place during their regular Sunday morning worship service on World Communion Sunday, October 7, 1973. We are excited to celebrate her 50th “ordiversary” together on World Communion Sunday in 2023—October 1! Please join us to offer a blessing for her in worship at the 10:30am service and a hearty congratulations and thanksgiving for her ministry at the Fellowship Coffee Hour that day. (There’ll be cake and gluten free goodies, along with all the baked goods to purchase from On the Rise Bakery!)

Neeta was a pioneer for women in ministry. In 1972, there were only about 50 women ordained in the Presbyterian Church. By the end of 1973, that number had tripled and she was among them. She has broken barriers that women ministers in my generation have not (as often) had to consider. Because of women like her, I never thought twice that God was calling me to serve. Because of women like her, I am able to be your pastor today.

Ordination is special for everyone who is blessed and sent to serve through it: deacons, elders, and pastors. As Presbyterians, we are clear that ordination is not a special status, it represents a commissioning for a particular kind of service. It reminds us of the kind of life we have committed to lead and the God we have been called to serve. Neeta has served faithfully and well for so many years, living out her commitments to follow Jesus Christ, love neighbors, and to serve with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love. As a young minister who met Neeta in my first year of ministry, I am especially grateful that she has lived out her ordination promise to “be a friend among your colleagues.”

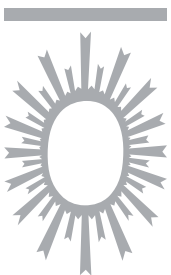
As we mark this important moment in time together, I hope you will celebrate Neeta, but also all the ways you have been called to serve God at various times in your own life. And that you can give thanks!

Grace and peace,

Pastor Emma



Church
Bell



fpcro

In-Person Worship

Sunday Worship:
9 am in Evans Chapel,
and 10:30 am in
the sanctuary.
(Masks are welcome,
but not required.)

Livestream Worship

Sundays at 10:30 am
watch the livestream
of the worship service
on Vimeo, Facebook or
YouTube. (Or anytime
later in the day/week.)

Sunday school
for children pre-
kindergarten through
5th grade begins after
the Time with Children
in worship at 10:30.

The nursery is open for
infant-toddler care.

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tenor **Brady DelVecchio**
soprano **Olivia Donnel**
soprano **Audrey Frieberg**

our staff

our soloists



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The **Church Bell** is published monthly
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contributions to newsletter@fpcro.org.
Deadline is the 15th of each month.

IS YOUR INFO CURRENT?

Please let Sally Gilreath (sgilreath@fpcro.org) know of changes to your contact information so we can maintain current and up-to-date records of your member information.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

FPCRO is a Stephen Ministry church. Stephen Ministers are lay caregivers trained to provide high-quality, confidential, Christ-centered care to people who are hurting.



OF NOTE:

Deaths:

Ruth McCoy, August 26, 2023



Are there any actions, habits, etc., you've decided need to fall by the wayside as you've reflected on your star word?




NEW MEMBER CLASS

Are you feeling called to learn more about our church or are you considering becoming a member? We would love to have you participate in our New Member Class. We will explore what it means to be Presbyterian, how we understand God and theology, and what it means to be a member of First Presbyterian Church. Our next series of classes will be held at **9am on Sundays October 29, November 5, and 12** in the Fireside Room. Member Suzanne Lewand teaches the classes. The final class will include brunch with church elders, and a welcome during the 10:30 worship service on **November 12**. Please let Pastor Emma know you plan to participate, and if you need childcare during the classes.



FALL GROUNDS CLEAN-UP

The House and Grounds Committee invites you to join us on **Saturday, November 4, from 9am-12noon** for the annual Fall Grounds Clean-Up. All are welcome! Bring work gloves and gardening gear as we rake leaves and prepare the church grounds for the coming winter.

COLUMBARIUM
Contact the church office for an information packet

memorials & gifts

A special gift was received in celebration of our Children's, Youth, and Music Programs.

THE PRESBY BAKING SHOWCASE

There are many people who like to bake. There are many people who like to eat baked goods. And there is a great opportunity to bring these people together. **You** are these people!



On **November 12**, the Generosity and Resources Committee will be hosting **The Presby Baking Showcase**. This is a fun opportunity to gather our church family together in fellowship to learn more about each other and share some yummy treats.

If you like to bake, sign up on the clipboard available after worship or at the Reception Desk. Or use the online sign-up method, which will be available later in the month. Bake a recipe that is a favorite, your specialty, or is a family tradition. Include a copy of your recipe, and be prepared to share the story of your baked good with our church family. Please provide small servings for at least 28. Paper plates and utensils will be provided.

All our church family will be invited to come to Kirkman Fellowship Hall after the 10:30am service to enjoy sampling what our bakers have provided. Fellowship and storytelling over baked treats will be a treat for us all.

SHINING GOD'S LIGHT INTO THE FUTURE...

Sunburst Stewards honors members who have included the church in their estate plans with a gift to the endowment. Knowledge of future gifts offers the church an opportunity to thank donors and allows church leadership to plan for the future. The ultimate benefit comes from knowing that we have recognized the importance of God in our lives and have made a powerful witness of that love through a gift to the church.



For more information about Sunburst Stewards, please contact Rev. Emma Nickel or the chairperson of the Finance and Investment Committee. All information given will remain confidential.

Worship and Nurture

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Starting **October 2**, FPCRO will offer an eight-week grief support group for those experiencing the loss of a loved one. Group sessions will consist of sharing, support, and resources. Sessions will be facilitated by Commissioned Ruling Elder, Pat Johnson, who has led similar groups for hospice families and families of those who passed away at a local hospital where she worked as a chaplain. Sign up confidentially using this link: <https://tinyurl.com/feh3w36j>. Please note there are only eight participant slots available. If you have questions, please email Pat at pjohnson71@gmail.com.



NEW MEN'S FELLOWSHIP GROUP

FPCRO is forming a new men's fellowship group to meet monthly at a local restaurant/pub/cafe on a weeknight for beverages, spiritual connection (lesson, reading, or prayer), and social/personal connection. The first gathering will be **Monday, October 9, at 7:30pm at Bagger Dave's in Berkley** for approximately an hour. As this is a brand-new group, participants will have the ability to shape the character and activity of the group and even name the group! The group is designed for men of FPCRO, but open and welcome to men who relate to the church community even if they are not members. For more information, please contact Matthew Nickel at hewnickel@gmail.com or Derek Helenberger at derekhelenberger@hotmail.com. Hope to see you on October 9!

RETREAT WEEKEND

Come take part in the Great Lakes Pilgrimage during the weekend of **October 13-15**. The Pilgrimage is a retreat held at the Echo Grove Camp and Conference Center in Leonard, MI on beautiful Lakeville Lake. The weekend is filled with group discussion, talks by laity and pastors, singing, and lots of laughter. It truly is a spiritual renewal weekend. Please see Norm Bayne for more information.



TRUNK OR TREAT CANDY DONATIONS!

Our exciting Trunk or Treat event is happening **Friday, October 20**. To ensure it is a success, we need candy donations. In the CE lobby, you will find a kiddie pool for the candy collection. Our goal is to fill the pool so we have enough for the 200+ children we expect to attend. We'd appreciate all candy donations be made by **Wednesday, October 11**, to allow time for preparation. If you would like to make a monetary donation, you may include "trunk or treat" on your donation.



DECORATE YOUR CAR FOR TRUNK OR TREAT

Our Trunk or Treat is a great time to be with children in our community. To help make the event a success, we need decorated cars. Choose a fun theme for your car and join us! Sign up at <https://tinyurl.com/4upv454h> or call the church office. The event is Friday, October 20 at 5pm. Your theme can be as simple as you'd like it to be.



FOUR-WEEK BIBLE STUDY IN OCTOBER "God and the Old Testament"

As Christians, we focus intensely on Jesus and the Gospels as the primary source for revealing God's activity with humanity. But before the incarnation, God's purposes for the earth and its people were taking shape. That activity is described in the Hebrew Scriptures.



What can we learn about God from the Old Testament? Join Pastor Neeta for this four-week study Wednesday evenings on **October 4, 11, 18, and 25**. We will meet at 7pm in the Fireside Room. Sign up using this link: <https://tinyurl.com/4e4wmjax>

CHILD INFORMATION

Just a reminder for parents and guardians to complete a Child Information Form for your children. As we focus on the safety of our children, it is important for us to have current information. The form may be completed online at <https://form.jotform.com/221714493449158>. If you have any questions, please contact Joelle Jarrait.



Reminder

SUNDAY SCHOOL

It's been a wonderful beginning to our Sunday school season! We welcome familiar faces and new friends. Our Curriculum, Living the Word, follows the same scripture explored in worship. This creates a great opportunity for children and their grown-ups to share in conversation about how they experience the Word of God.



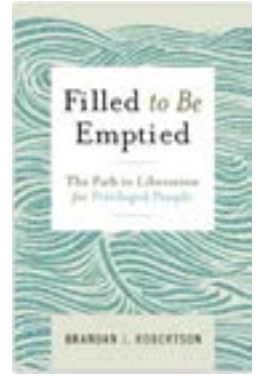
LIVING THE WORD

Following the Time with Children in worship, children can go to their age appropriate class. In addition to our nursery care, we have a preschool class and an elementary age class. Our middle school age class meets on the 2nd and 4th Sundays.

FALL BOOK DISCUSSION

Get Your Book and Save the Date for Nov 8

During 2023-24, Pastor Emma will lead several book discussions focused around the themes of our church's Matthew 25 commitment. That commitment entails working to end structural racism, eliminate systemic poverty, and act as a vital congregation in our community.



On **November 8 at 7pm**, we'll meet in the Fireside Room to talk about *Filled to be Emptied: The Path to Liberation for Privileged People* by Brandan J. Robertson. You can buy a copy of the paperback book, or read it on your Kindle. This book is part Bible study, part invitation to self-reflection, and part theological work. Robertson traces the Kenosis Hymn—a short passage in the book of Philippians 2:5-11—which describes the way Christ emptied himself of power to become humble in service to God. Readers are invited to consider how we can choose humility by thinking differently about the various privileges we carry. The book touches on race and poverty, among other issues, and is an invitation to people across the spectrum to faithfully consider our own lives in relation to our wider community. It is highly readable and offers a fresh perspective. If you would like to read a copy, but purchasing one is hard for you, simply contact Pastor Emma.

Sunflowers Christian Preschool



A fun new year of preschool has begun. We are having a great time with new friends, and enjoying the routines of our school day. There are a lot of busy activities in the classroom, and the playground is always fun on a sunny day.

With October being Fire Safety Month, keeping safe is a focus topic for us.

The beautiful autumn colors outside our classroom window come inside as we paint with orange this month. Our three-year-olds are practicing their fine motor skills, learning how to play cooperatively, and doing some wonderful art projects. Our four-year-olds are jumping into the alphabet, studying one letter per week, as well as all the other things that make school fun.

Our hallway and classroom are being filled with beautiful artwork. We love displaying them to keep us in the fall mood.

Mrs. Gibson and Mrs. Heitchue

Mission in Service

SAVE THE
DATE —
ON THE
RISE BAKERY!



On **Sunday, October 1**, after the 10:30am worship service, On the Rise Bakery will be selling baked goods. Goodies such as bread, cookies, muffins, pies, and cakes, ranging in price from \$2 to \$8, will be available for purchase. In purchasing their baked goods, you are helping make possible the provision of supportive housing, training, counseling services, educational opportunities, and self-help programs. On the Rise Bakery is a program where each man is responsible to reach back and support the newest member.

On the Rise Bakery and R.O.P.E. (Reaching Our Potential Everyday) are two of the many programs of the Capuchin Soup Kitchen. The R.O.P.E. Program provides men who have been incarcerated or completed a Substance Use Disorder Program a way to “re-enter” society by training them in baking skills. The extended residential program offers the opportunity for them to develop abilities that will solidify their sobriety, further their education, and hone their life skills.



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

FPCRO had reserved 15 spots to volunteer in the Oak Park Forgotten Harvest warehouse on **Saturday, October 7, from 9am-12pm**. Volunteers must be at least 10 years of age. Please sign up on the link provided: <https://tinyurl.com/29yuzfcn> We will then provide you with more information about signing up on the Forgotten Harvest website. Please contact Edie Watson or the church for more information.

Forgotten Harvest is fighting hunger and food insecurity in Metro Detroit by picking up food from over 520 food donors. Volunteers then clean and repack food into family-sized portions which are distributed to families in Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb counties. Their team delivers 144,000 pounds of surplus food per day to local charities.

Generosity and Resources

WHAT IS PER CAPITA?

This year our congregation pays a per capita amount of \$36 per member to the Presbyterian Church USA. The yearly gift is given to allow every church the ability to engage in shared activities and to connect to the universal church. Like a family, we share costs to demonstrate unity. One of our missions is to connect to other Presbyterian churches; we create a more equitable communal relationship as Jesus taught us “to love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39). We give to this fund to increase our effort of helping people around the world. Per capita is not retained by our individual church, but given to the larger church in ministry to the world.

PER CAPITA FOCUS

Have you contributed your per capita gift for this year? If not, please consider giving it this month. You can use the blue envelope at the front of the contribution boxes, pick up a per capita envelope in the narthex, or just write “per capita” on the memo line of your check and put it in the offering plate on Sunday. If you are an electronic giver, you can send Kari Peruski an email (kperuski@fpcro.org) to let her know how much you would like automatically deducted for per capita. Electronic Givers who authorized their per capita payment on their pledge card don’t need to send an email and already have their per capita gift processed in September.



Pulling Out All the Stops

ORGAN CONCERT
with JOSEPH JACKSON



7 PM • NOV 3, 2023

First Presbyterian
Church of Royal Oak

529 Hendrie Blvd.

Free concert admission.



TICKETED Pre-Concert
Wine & Cheese Reception

Ticket Pricing & More Info Available Online:

www.fpcro.org/calendar-events

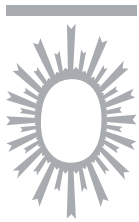
**Worship with us at 9 & 10:30 am,
or online anytime at www.fpcro.org**

www.fpcro.org • [facebook.com/fpcro](https://www.facebook.com/fpcro)

instagram: [fpcro1914](https://www.instagram.com/fpcro1914)

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fpcro *Spirituality • Service • Sharing*

find us on:



Fall Events at FPCRO — Mark Your Calendar!

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| Oct 1 • Sunburst Singers | Oct 15 • Sunburst Singers | Nov 3 • Organ Concert |
| Oct 1 • On the Rise Bakery | Oct 16 • Grief Support Group | Nov 4 • Fall Grounds Clean-Up |
| Oct 2 • Grief Support Group Begins | Oct 18 • “God & The Old Testament” Bible Study | Nov 5 • New Member Class |
| Oct 4 • “God & The Old Testament” Bible Study Begins | Oct 20 • Trunk or Treat | Nov 5 • Sunburst Singers |
| Oct 7 • Forgotten Harvest Volunteer Event | Oct 22 • Fellowship Coffee Hour after 10:30am worship | Nov 6 • Grief Support Group |
| Oct 9 • Grief Support Group | Oct 23 • Grief Support Group | Nov 8 • Fall Book Discussion |
| Oct 9 • Mens’s Fellowship Group Begins | Oct 25 • “God & The Old Testament” Bible Study | Nov 12 • New Member Class |
| Oct 11 • “God & The Old Testament” Bible Study | Oct 29 • New Member Class Begins | Nov 12 • The Presby Baking Showcase |
| Oct 11 • Candy Donation Deadline | Oct 30 • Grief Support Group | Nov 13 • Grief Support Group |
| | | Nov 19 • Sunburst Singers |
| | | Nov 19 • Hanging of the Greens |
| | | Nov 20 • Grief Support Group |